## National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

## 2023 - 2024 Convention

## AGENDA

## Expect Much ⸱ Give Much ⸱ Get Much!

## Friday, February 16 to Sunday, February 18



*Image description: Two hands grasping the fingers of one another, surrounded by a word collage including the words: generosity, lovingly, trust, spreading, offering, compassion, sharing, practicing, kindness, dignity, service, acceptance, and nonjudgement.*

### The Members of the Board of Directors and the Host Committee welcome you to the 58th Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

Ronza Othman, President  
National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

Justin Young, Chairperson  
Convention Logistics Committee

*Scott White, Chairperson*  
Convention Host Committee

*Mildred Rivera, President*  
TLC Chapter

*Latonya Phipps, President*  
Baltimore County Chapter

*Christopher Danielsen, President*  
Greater Baltimore Chapter

*Qualik Ford, President*Maryland Association of Blind Students

*Garret Mooney, President*Maryland Parents of Blind Children

## Welcome

Welcome to the 58th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland! This year’s convention will be held in Towson at the Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel.

**Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel**

**903 Dulaney Valley Road, Towson, MD 21201**

**410-321-7400**

A detailed description of the layout of the hotel can be found later in this agenda. When you check into the hotel, you will be asked to confirm your departure date. If you decide to leave earlier than the departure date you confirm when you check in, there may be an additional fee.

### Special Information for First-Time Attendees



All first-time convention attendees are cordially invited to attend a **First-Timers Orientation from 8 to 9:30 p.m., on Thursday, February 8.** The Ambassadors Committee will walk you through the events that will take place throughout the weekend, explain processes such as door prizes and voting, as well as make sure every first-time convention attendee is matched with a mentor. This orientation will be held virtually, the codes to join via web conference or via conference call are below.

**Zoom Meeting ID**: 624 813 8327

**One-Number Conference Call:** 339-209-4083

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Conduct

We are committed to providing a safe and harassment-free environment for everyone. Thank you for cultivating an atmosphere in which participants from diverse backgrounds can learn, network, and share with each other in an environment of mutual respect. We are committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and the free expression of ideas. These principles have been outlined in our code of conduct, which can be found at   
[**NFB.org/About-Us/History-and-Governance/Code-Conduct**](https://nfb.org/About-Us/History-and-Governance/Code-Conduct).

We recognize a shared responsibility to create and uphold an atmosphere that benefits everyone. Prohibited behaviors include harassment, unwelcome sexual attention, and inappropriate use of the NFBMD convention space and platforms. Prohibited behavior or misuse of our space and platforms will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the convention and/or other consequences.

**For assistance, or to report an incident at the convention,   
please call 585-770-4073 or   
email** [**convention@nfbmd.org**](mailto:convention@nfbmd.org) **for immediate attention.**

Formal reports can be submitted to the NFB national office at: [**NFB.org/About-Us/History-and-Governance/Code-Conduct/  
Report-Form**](https://nfb.org/About-Us/History-and-Governance/Code-Conduct/Report-Form)

All formal reports will be thoroughly investigated according to the   
code of conduct. We thank you for contributing to the integrity   
of our community and the high expectations we strive to maintain.

## Pre-Registration and On-Site Registration

Registration activities take place in the Fitzgerald North Foyer, which is outside of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Ballroom (Fitzgerald Ballroom), located on the Plaza Level (first floor), Friday between 1 and 6 p.m.; Saturday between 8 and 8:25 a.m., and 12 and 12:15 p.m.; and Sunday between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. All convention attendees — both local and from out of town — are asked to register.

Those who pre-registered for the convention may pick up their registration packets in the area designated pre-registration.

Those who did not pre-register may go to the area designated registration. Please have your check, credit card, Zelle, or cash ready to pay the onsite registration fee of $30 per person.

Convention registration is a requirement for voting, door prize eligibility, and other convention activities. All registrants will receive wrist bands, which will indicate voting eligibility. Additionally, discounted rates for hotel rooms are contingent on proof of registration.

## Fun with Friends Convention Child Care Activities

All child care (for children ages 6 weeks to 9 years) will take place in the Duncan Room on the second level. Hours are: Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturday 8:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., and 6:30 to 10 p.m., or at conclusion of the banquet, whichever is earlier (lunch and dinner will be provided). Contact Garret Mooney at [**james.garret.mooney@gmail.com**](mailto:james.garret.mooney@gmail.com) for details.

## Exhibit Hall

The exhibit hall is located in the Fitzgerald West Foyer and in Fitz A on the plaza level. The exhibit hall will operate on Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## Special Attention Items

* Banquet tickets may be purchased for $60 at the on-site registration area. We will accept cash, credit cards, Zelle, and checks. No tickets will be available after 12 p.m., on Saturday. At the banquet ticket exchange table, you may make arrangements to reserve a specific seat for yourself or for a group of up to 10 people. On the evening of the banquet, tickets will be required to enter the ballroom and will be collected at the tables.   
    
  Tickets may be exchanged for vegetarian or meat meals at the banquet ticket exchange table prior to 2 p.m., on Saturday.
* Individuals with dietary restrictions must submit those requests in advance, as such meals must often be ordered and/or prepared off-site. Requests related to dietary restrictions should be sent to [**president@nfbmd.org**](mailto:president@nfbmd.org) by January 31, 2024.
* Requests for reasonable accommodations — other than Braille and large print agendas, which will be available for all — must be submitted in advance, as such accommodations often require advanced arrangements. Requests for accommodations should be sent to [**president@nfbmd.org**](mailto:president@nfbmd.org) by January 31, 2024.
* Banquet ticket exchange will be located in the Fitzgerald North Foyer, on the plaza level, outside the Fitzgerald Ballroom on Saturday between 1:20 and 2 p.m.
* General sessions will be in the Fitzgerald Ballroom on the plaza level.
* Boxed lunches will be resold if not picked up by 12:30 p.m., on Friday. Those interested in boxed lunches on Friday should visit the Fitzgerald North Foyer. Those who fail to pick up their boxed lunches by   
  12:30 p.m., on Friday will forfeit them and will not receive a refund.
* Tickets for other meals may be purchased on a first-come, first-served basis from the registration table. The costs are:
  + Dinner and a Play: $30
  + Senior Issues Luncheon: $35
  + Parents Luncheon: $35
  + Students Luncheon: $35
  + Banquet: $60
* Qualik Ford and Juhi Narula are the co-chairs of the Door Prize Committee. Please turn in your door prizes to Qualik and/or Juhi as soon as possible. You must be registered for the convention and be present when your name is called in order to win a door prize. Door prizes will be awarded during the general sessions on Saturday and Sunday and during the convention banquet.
* Joel Zimba is the chairman of the National Funding Support Committee, which manages our Bake and Experience Auction. Please consider bringing baked goods and donating experiences such as dinners, cooking lessons, etc., for this auction.
* The Student Division will host a Fire Sale for individually wrapped baked items, e.g., single cupcakes, brownies, and cookies.
* We will have a cane walk with individualized cane travel instruction by an NOMC on Friday at 5 p.m. To reserve a slot for your child or for yourself, please contact Garret Mooney at [**james.garret.mooney@gmail.com**](mailto:james.garret.mooney@gmail.com)**.**
* On Sunday, you must check out of your room before 11 a.m. Please note, the convention is not scheduled to adjourn until 1 p.m. After check-out, you may store your luggage by dropping it off at the Warfield Ballroom on the plaza level between 7:30 and 9 a.m., Sunday. Please be sure your luggage is clearly labeled with your name, address, and telephone number. All luggage must be picked up by 1:30 p.m., or 15 minutes after adjournment, whichever is earlier.
* If you are leaving the Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel on an NFB of Maryland bus, please bring your luggage to the Warfield Ballroom on the plaza level between 7:30 and 9 a.m., Sunday. Your luggage will be tagged and held, and then loaded onto the busses at 1 p.m. Please be sure your luggage is clearly labeled with your name, address, and telephone number.
* There are two guide dog relief areas: one in the courtyard adjacent to the hotel registration/check-in desk and the other is just outside the Fitzgerald North Foyer. Please be mindful that both areas are down a short flight of stairs, and you will need to prop the door for the Fitzgerald North Foyer in order to be able to get back into the hotel from that entrance. An ADA accessible guide dog relief area is available at the main hotel entrance to the right of the portico.

***Organization Information***

## National Federation of the Blind of Maryland 1800 Johnson Street, Suite N1, Baltimore, MD 21230 443-426-4110; [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image of Mark Riccobono | Image of Ronza Othman |
| **Image: Mark Riccobono**  *President*  National Federation of the Blind | **Image: Ronza Othman**  *President*  National Federation of the Blind of Maryland |

|  |
| --- |
| Image of Kevin Worley |
| **Image: Kevan Worley**  *National Representative & President*  Colorado Center for the Blind Board of Directors;  Principle, Worley Enterprises |

### Officers:

Ronza Othman, *President*, Baltimore

Deborah Brown, *First Vice President*, Rockville

Christopher Danielsen, *Second Vice President*, Baltimore

Judy Rasmussen, *Secretary*, Kensington

Jenivieve White, *Treasurer*, Owings Mills

### Board of Directors:

Qualik Ford, Halethorpe

Sharon Maneki, Columbia

Garret Mooney, Baltimore

Mildred Rivera, Lutherville

Melissa Riccobono, Baltimore

Marguerite Woods, Baltimore

### Past Presidents:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Image of Marc Maurer | Image of Melissa Riccobono | Image of Michael Gosse | Image of Sharon Maneki |
| Marc Maurer | Melissa Riccobono | Michael Gosse | Sharon Maneki |

### Our Credo

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back!

### The National Federation of the Blind Pledge

*I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind; to support the policies and programs of the federation; and to abide by its constitution.*

### About the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland (NFBMD), an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), is an organization of blind people and their family and friends. We believe in the full capacity of blind people; we have the power, influence, diversity, and determination to help transform our dreams into reality. Our members work together for a brighter tomorrow by raising the expectations for blind people everywhere so that blind persons can live the lives they want.

### Who We Are

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland is a 501c(3) nonprofit comprised of blind people of all ages, their families and friends. Our strong local chapters and divisions, and well-trained leaders help newly blind people adjust to vision loss and promote the full participation and integration of blind people in our communities. We bring our collective experiences together to effect change at the state and national level.

### What We Do

* Assist blind and low-vision persons to acquire the skills of independence
* Help blind and low-vision persons to develop confidence in themselves through our many service activities
* Teach blind and low-vision persons the skills of leadership through active participation in conventions, chapter meetings, and civic activities
* Encourage blind and low-vision seniors to continue their active and meaningful lifestyles
* Prepare blind and low-vision students for productive tax-paying careers through academic and training scholarships
* Inform people with diabetes about options for coping with vision loss
* Support parents and friends of blind and low-vision children with information about the capabilities of the blind
* Protect and promote the civil rights of blind and low-vision persons through public education and legislative action
* Advocate for policies that eliminate discrimination and guarantee equal access to educational programs and high-quality rehabilitation
* Educate the public through seminars, community activities and our publications

### Thank You, Convention Sponsors

### *We extend profuse thanks to the following convention sponsors.*

**Blind Industries and Services of Maryland,** Title Level Sponsor

**Vanda Pharmaceuticals,** Equality Level Sponsor

**Maryland Accessible Communications / Communications Facilitator,** Independence Level Sponsor

**AdNet/AccountNet, Inc.**, Independence Level Sponsor

**Brown, Goldstein and Levy LLP**, Opportunity Level Sponsor

**Friends of the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled**, Opportunity Level Sponsor

**WZBA-FM 100.7 The Bay**, Opportunity Level Sponsor

**3D PhotoWorks**, Freedom Level Sponsor

**Democracy Live**, Freedom Level Sponsor

**Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, Freedom Level Sponsor**

**Sipbound Corporation**, Freedom Level Sponsor



*Full page ad for BISM: Empowering the Blind Community. Employing. Educating. Training. Proud sponsor of the NFB of Maryland State Convention. National Federation of the Blind logo. There are 4 images of blind people working hands-on with various materials. "Looking for career opportunities and/or training... We are the spot. Will you join us?"* [*www.BISM.org*](file:///C:\Users\Justin%20Young\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\K631W4FA\www.BISM.org)

**Navigating the Sheraton Baltimore North**

The Sheraton Baltimore North Hotel is located at 903 Dulaney Valley Road, across the street from the Towson Town Center. Meeting rooms and common areas are located on the first and second floors. Guest rooms are on the third floor and above. The gym and pool are also on the third floor.

## Plaza Level (first floor):

As you come into the tiled lobby of the hotel through the main entrance doors, directly in front of you is a large carpeted square seating area with chairs. To the right of the central carpeted area is the front desk.

On the far side of the carpeted area, directly opposite the main door, is another entry/exit to: a smoking area; a flight of stairs going down with trash cans on either side at the top of the steps; and at the bottom of the stairs, a grassy area appropriate for dog relief. (Please don’t forget to use a baggie!) This exit is also the closest one to Towson Town Center.

To the left of the central carpeted area (opposite the front desk) is a divided hallway which leads to the rest of the hotel facilities on this level. Think of it as an L-shaped hallway. If you start at the main entrance and put your back to the hotel’s front desk and walk forward, you will be at the apex of the L, where there is the first staircase to the second level. Along the short leg of the L to your right is the Coffee Corner, where every day from   
6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., you can get Starbucks, pastries, salads, sandwiches, yogurt, and assorted fresh fruit and snacks. Past the Coffee Corner, you will find the elevator lobby. There are two elevators on the left and one on the right. All three elevators may be used to access the floors of guest rooms, the second floor where the meeting rooms are located, and the third floor where the fitness area and pool are located.

If you go back to the apex of the L-shaped hallway, the long leg of this hallway takes you past multiple conversation areas, and eventually leads, with a bit of a curve, to the conference facilities on the plaza level. With the lobby directly behind you, continue down this hallway. First on your left is the Business Center (for guest use), with two tables, each with a computer, and a printer between them. Next on the left of the hallway you will find some big comfy chairs facing a flat screen TV. Opposite this seating area, on the right side of the main hallway are the afore-mentioned stairs (which are around the corner from the Coffee Corner).

Further down the hall on the left is a high-top table surrounded by six chairs with plug-ins for eight devices. Directly opposite this table, on the right side of the hallway, is the beginning of Warfield’s Ballroom. Warfield’s Ballroom extends down the right side of the hallway. One entrance to Warfield’s Ballroom has a few steps in front, but the other entrance is accessible. Further down the hallway on the left are several groupings of round high-top tables and chairs.

Past Warfield’s you will be heading straight to the host stand for the Rain 903 Restaurant and Lounge, where you wait to be seated. At this point the main part of the hallway (which is no longer carpeted) opens up and slightly veers off to the left. Once you have turned left, you will pass the restaurant and then the steps that lead up to the bar on your right. Past the bar on the right side of the hallway are the restrooms. There is a wall with a flat screen display blocking direct access to the restrooms. Go around the wall on either side to find the restroom alcove with the ladies’ room on the left and the men’s room on the right. There are two water fountains between the restrooms. On the left side of the hallway opposite the wall shielding the restroom alcove are more high-top tables with chairs.

Continue past the restrooms just a short distance and find another large carpeted open area. This is the Fitzgerald West Foyer. With your back to the central hallway, there’s another entry/exit door going to/from the parking area, on your left. To your right, across the foyer is the very large   
F. Scott Fitzgerald Ballroom. There are many entry/exit doors to this area, which we will use for exhibits and other meetings on Friday, general sessions on Saturday and Sunday, and the banquet on Saturday evening.

Along the far left side of the Fitzgerald Ballrooms, you will find another long hallway, called the Fitzgerald North Foyer. This is where convention registration, packet pickup, and banquet ticket exchange will be located. You must walk through the Fitzgerald West Foyer to get to the Fitzgerald North Foyer. At the end of the Fitzgerald North Foyer is a short set of stairs that lead outside to a second guide dog relief area.

At the end of the hallway that leads from the main lobby, past the Fitzgerald West Foyer on your right, is the second set of stairs, which lead to the second floor. One can walk directly under the stairs, so be careful not to bump your head.

## Second Floor:

Directly across from the top of the stairs that are in the Fitzgerald Foyer area is one of the two entrances to the Duncan Room. You can only turn right at the top of the stairs. On your left you will first pass the Duncan Room, followed by the Amphitheater. After the first entrance to the Amphitheater, the hallway opens up to something like a T-intersection. If you follow the wall on the left, past the second Amphitheater entrance, you will be able to make a right into another hallway. On the left side of this hallway, you will first encounter a set of restrooms (ladies on the left and men on the right). Further down the hall on the left you will find Lindsay A, B, and C. There is nothing else in this hallway.

Back at the 3-way intersection with the stairs behind you, the Grason Room is straight ahead of you. Turn right here and on your left you will pass the Burke Room, the MacIntosh Room and the Cole Room, beyond that is the Sales and Catering Office. Along the right side of the hallway is an opening which allows you to look down on the plaza level. As you approach the end of this hallway, there is another large open space. If you follow the wall to your left, you will find the stairs that take you downstairs near the lobby around the corner from the Coffee Corner. Pass the stairs on your left and turn left into the elevator lobby, where you will find two elevators on the left and one on the right.

## Third Floor:

As you leave the elevator lobby, straight ahead is the fitness center, including the pool. You will need your room key to enter this area. The hallway off to the right leads to guest rooms.

## LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT

## Lyrics copied from October 2015 Presidential Release

**Chorus:** Live the life you want. Nobody can stop you.  
Shoot for the sun and break on through.  
So you're blind. You'll be fine. We've got good news!  
You can live the life you want. Yes, we know the truth.

Grab a cane, get trained, gotta get movin’.  
Make a change in the wage, that's what we're doin’.  
Come with me, yeah

**Chorus**

You and me, NFB, let’s dream together.  
NFB, you and me, lives on forever.  
You will see, yeah.

**Chorus**

You can live the life you want. You’ll know the truth.

### *Chapters and Divisions of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland*

### At Large Chapter

Marguerite Woods, president, 443-271-1668, [mwoods719@gmail.com](mailto:mwoods719@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., via phone: 339-209-4083

### Baltimore County Chapter

Latonya Phipps, president, 443-465-8761, [Phippslatonya@gmail.com](mailto:Phippslatonya@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: second Wednesday at BISM

### Central Maryland Chapter

Matt Yannuzzi, president, 443-851-1944, [Matthew.Yannuzzi@gmail.com](mailto:Matthew.Yannuzzi@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: first Tuesday in Columbia

### Eastern Shore Chapter

Heather Guy, president, 410-430-8954, [hguy403@comcast.net](mailto:hguy403@comcast.net)

Monthly meetings: second Saturday in Salisbury

### Greater Baltimore Chapter

Chris Danielsen, president, 410-262-1281, [Cdanielsen@nfb.org](mailto:Cdanielsen@nfb.org)

Monthly meetings: third Saturday in Baltimore

### Greater Carroll County Chapter

Brian Keseling, president, 410-855-5605, [bkmaverick@gmail.com](mailto:bkmaverick@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: second Saturday in Westminster

### Maryland Association of Blind Students

Qualik Ford, president, 301-312-9813, [qsford@outlook.com](mailto:qsford@outlook.com)

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### Maryland Association of Blind Merchants

Melba Taylor, president, 240-381-1637, [m.taylor@encoreassoc.com](mailto:m.taylor@encoreassoc.com)

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### Maryland Parents of Blind Children

Garret Mooney, president, 480-433-8003, [james.garret.mooney@gmail.com](mailto:james.garret.mooney@gmail.com)

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### National Harbor Chapter

Amber Woods, president, 301-978-6686, [woodsamber83@gmail.com](mailto:woodsamber83@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: fourth Saturday in Suitland

### Senior Issues Division

Marguerite Woods, president, 443-271-1668, [mwoods719@gmail.com](mailto:mwoods719@gmail.com)

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### Sligo Creek Chapter

Debbie Brown, president, 301-881-1892, [Deborahb14@verizon.net](mailto:Deborahb14@verizon.net)

Monthly meetings: second Saturday primarily in Silver Spring

### TLC Chapter

Millie Rivera, president, 202-494-5687, [Millie.Rivera0027@gmail.com](mailto:Millie.Rivera0027@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: second Tuesday in Towson

### Western Maryland Chapter

Wendy Ruth, president, 301-991-8312, [Wendyruth966@gmail.com](mailto:Wendyruth966@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings: First Saturday in Cumberland

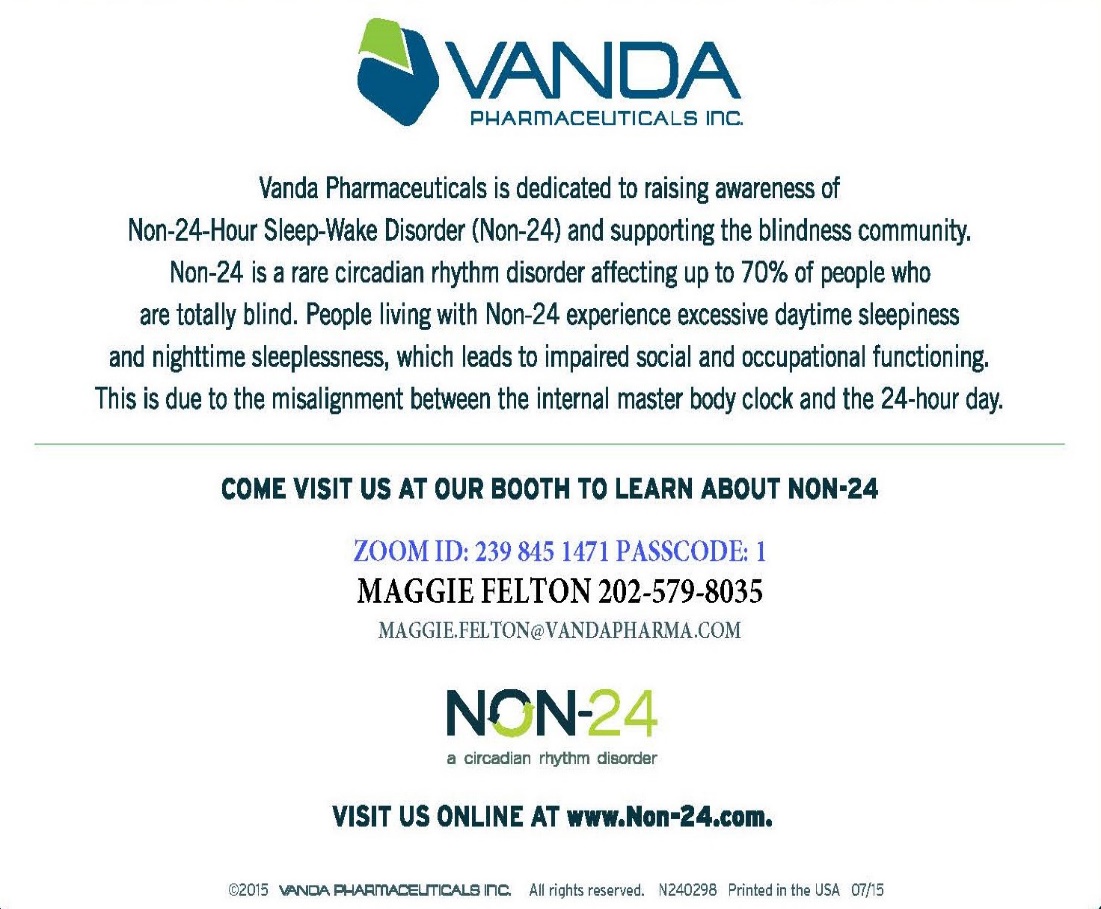


Image Description: Half-page ad from Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Inc. On the left side of the ad is a photo of a man wearing dark glasses walking through a lobby led by a guide dog. Vanda Pharmaceuticals is dedicated to raising awareness of Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder (Non-24) and supporting the blindness community. Non-24 is a rare circadian rhythm disorder affecting up to 70% of people who are totally blind. People living with Non-24 experience excessive daytime sleepiness and nighttime sleeplessness, which leads to impaired social and occupational functioning. This is due to the misalignment between the internal master body clock and the 24-hour day. Come visit us at our booth to learn more about Non-24.Zoom ID: 239 845 1471 Passcode: 1 Maggie Felton 202-579-8035, [Maggie.felton@vandapharma.com](mailto:Maggie.felton@vandapharma.com). Non-24: a circadian rhythm disorder Visit us online at [www.non-24.com](http://www.non-24.com)

**GLORY FEDERATION**

Blind eyes have seen the vision of the Federation way;

New white cane legislation brings the dawn of a new day;

The right of the blind to organize is truly here to stay;

Our cause goes marching on.

**Chorus**

Glory, glory Federation;

Glory, glory Federation;

Glory, glory Federation;

Our cause goes marching on.

To aid the blind's long struggle we have formed the NFB

To free them from their bondage of workshop and agency,

To give a hand to all the blind wherever they may be;

Our cause goes marching on.

**Chorus**

### *Stay Connected and Informed:*

### Icon with social media emblems: facebook like icon, twitter logo, pinterest logo, LinkedIn logo, Google plus logo, Instagram logo.

Follow and like the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland on Facebook: [**facebook.com/NationalFederationOfTheBlindOfMaryland**](https://www.facebook.com/nationalfederationoftheblindofmaryland)

Stay connected with your fellow Maryland Federationists by joining our state email listserv. This list allows you to receive affiliate and national announcements, and also to start and participate in discussions regarding blindness and blindness issues. To sign up visit [**NFBnet.org**](https://nfbnet.org/), click on “join or drop NFB mailing lists,” and activate “NFBMD” link, and follow the instructions. Many of our local chapters now also have a listserv. Talk to your chapter president to learn how to sign up so you don’t miss important information about chapter news and events.

Visit our website at [**NFBMD.org**](https://nfbmd.org/). Check out our blog for the President’s Messages. Be sure to check out the Blindness Resources link, and the Know Your Rights link to keep up to date on important information. Be sure to download and print “About NFBMD,” in the “About Us” tab on [**NFBMD.org**](https://nfbmd.org/about), for use at chapter outreach events.

## Braille Spectator

The ***Braille Spectator*** is published for members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland and others who share an interest in the work of this organization. The ***Braille Spectator*** can be read on the web at [**NFBMD.org/Newsletter**](https://nfbmd.org/Newsletter) or can be listened to on the local channel of NFB-Newsline.



Image: NFB BELL Academy students in Baltimore celebrate Louis Braille’s birthday



Image: NFB BELLX Academy students in Salisbury attend a holiday party.



Image: NFB BELL Academy students in Southern Maryland sit in a canoe



Image: Governor Moore signs Accessible Prescription Label bill into law surrounded by NFBMD members

Images: NFBMD members stand with sponsor Delegate Mary Lehman at House Guide Dog Protections in Housing bill hearing (left) and sponsor Senator Mary Dulany James at Senate Guide Dog Protections in Housing bill hearing (right).



Image: NFBMD members stand with sponsor Senator Benjamin Brooks at Senate Accessible Electronic Ballot Return Voting bill hearing



Image: NFBMD members stand with sponsor Delegate Michele Guyton at House Accessible Prescription Labels bill hearing



Image: NFBMD members, Senator Lam, and Delegate Feldmark receive White Cane Day proclamation at Wizarding Weekend on Magical Main to commemorate Blind Equality Achievement Month



Image: NFBMD members receive White Cane Day proclamation at Worcester County Board Meeting

### Committees of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

If you’re interested in being appointed to a particular committee, notify the NFBMD president at [president@nfbmd.org](mailto:president@nfbmd.org) or 443-426-4110.

### Advocacy Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Ambassadors Committee

Judy Rasmussen and Debbie Brown, co-chairpersons

### Audit Committee

Barry Hond and Justin Young, co-chairpersons

### BELL Committee

Melissa Riccobono, chairperson

### Braille Spectator Committee

Ronza Othman and Sharon Maneki, editors

### Deaf-Blind and Hearing Loss Issues Committee

Janice Toothman and Heather Guy, co-chairpersons

**Development and Fundraising Committee**

Jenivieve White and Ellen Ringlein, co-chairpersons

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Juhi Narula and Qualik Ford, co-chairpersons

### Employment Committee

Pam Goodman and Jannis Forbes, co-chairpersons

### Guide Dog Issues Committee

Sherry Shirek, chairperson

### Legislation Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Membership Committee

Dezman Jackson, chairperson

### Nominating Committee

Ellen Ringlein, chairperson

**PAC Plan Committee**

John Paré and Ann-Marie Laney, co-chairpersons

### Public Relations Committee

Chris Danielsen, chairperson

### Resolutions Committee

Chris Danielsen, chairperson

### Scholarship Committee

Mildred Rivera, chairperson

### Sharon Maneki Youth Empowerment Grant Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Social Media Committee

Karen Anderson, chairperson

### Spanish Services Committee

Teresa Graham, chairperson

### Sports and Recreation Committee

Qualik Ford and Harvey Guary, co-chairpersons

### Transportation Committee

Aloma Bouma and Sheryl Fogle-Hatch, co-chairpersons

### Website and Technology Committee

John Berggren, chairperson

### Youth Activity Committee

Brittany Bomboy, chairperson

### Convention-Related Committees

### Anna Freysz Cable Award Committee

Debbie Brown, chairperson

### Convention Child Care Committee

Brittany Bomboy, chairperson

### Convention Logistics Committee

Justin Young, chairperson

### Convention Registration Committee

Marie Marucci, chairperson

### Distinguished Educator of Blind Children Award Committee

Teresa Graham, chairperson

### Door Prize Committee

Juhi Narula and Qualik Ford, co-chairpersons

### Gold Cup Crab Race Committee

Juhi Narula and Jen White, co-chairpersons

### Jennifer Baker Award Committee

Melissa Riccobono, chairperson

### Kenneth Jernigan Award Committee

Mary Ellen Jernigan, chairperson

### National Funding Support Auction Committee

Joel Zimba, chairperson

### Groups of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

If you’re interested in joining a particular group, contact that group’s chairperson.

### Blind Crafters Group

Danielle McCann and Karen Anderson, co-chairpersons

### Blind Parents Group

Faith Waybright and Melissa Riccobono, co-chairpersons

### Diabetes Action Network

Eileen Ley, chairperson

### Performing Arts Group

Chris Danielsen, chairperson

### Significant Others and Loved Ones Group

Jenivieve White and David Waybright, co-chairpersons

### Veterans Group

Ed Jackson, chairperson

**Leaving A Legacy: Dream Makers Circle**

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. It is easier than you think. Just visit your bank and convert an account to a P.O.D. (payable on death) bank account which is payable after your passing to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland can be made in the form of a will or living trust, an income generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, IRA, pension, or a life insurance policy. You can designate a specific amount, a percentage, or list NFB as one of several beneficiaries. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at 410-659-9314, ext. 2422 or at [pchang@nfb.org](mailto:pchang@nfb.org).

**STRIVE**

*Lyrics by Barbara Elliott*

Sometimes people tell me blind people should be quiet and sit down  
But I say "No!" I say "No!" I say "No."  
They contend that I should be content to let others lead me around,  
But I say "No!" I say "No!" I say "No."  
Everybody needs somebody to help sometimes, but I'm in charge of me,

**Chorus:** I've gotta strive, strive, strive a little farther,  
Reach, reach, reach a little longer,  
Work, work, work a little harder,  
Hope, hope, hope a little stronger.  
Watch me, watch me, watch me.  
Nothin's gonna stop me, stop me, stop me.  
I'm spreading my wings, soaring on a dream,  
I can do anything!

I gotta be brave even when I'm afraid to do hard things.  
I'll tell myself "Go!" I'll just go, I will go.  
I'm not a fool; I need training and tools to live out my dreams.  
So I'll say "Go!" I'll just go, I will go.  
I'm not a passenger in my life. I'm gonna take control and drive.

**Chorus**

### *Convention Agenda*

### Friday, February 16

**8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Fun with Friends Childcare**

*Duncan Room*

Brittany Bomboy, Convention Childcare Coordinator; Baltimore, Maryland

**9 to 10:55 a.m. — NFBMD Board of Directors Meeting** (Open to All)

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

**11 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. — Resolutions Committee Meeting**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

Everyone is encouraged to attend!

Chris Danielsen, chairperson; Baltimore, Maryland

**11 a.m. to 6 p.m. — Exhibits and Transition Fair**

*Fitzgerald West Foyer and Fitzgerald Ballroom A*

Check out the latest offerings from a variety of companies and organizations that provide technology and services for the blind. Engage with providers of transition services for those age 14 to 21 in Maryland.

Jenivieve White, sponsorship and exhibits coordinator and treasurer, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Owings Mills, Maryland

**11 a.m. to 3:55 p.m.** — **Annual Conference for Parents and Teachers of Blind Children: Maryland Parents of Blind Children**

*Lindsay A*

What are the skills and tools blind students need in school and to live the lives they want? How do we best prepare transition-age students for life beyond school? How do you make sure school and rehabilitation services are appropriately addressing their needs? What can you do to support them at home and in school? Learn about resources, opportunities, blindness skills, and how to have and model a positive attitude on blindness. These are only some of the topics to be discussed at this seminar.

Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division; Baltimore, Maryland

**11:30 a.m. — Boxed Lunch Distribution**

*Fitzgerald North Foyer*

\*You paid for a boxed lunch at pre-registration. Lunches must be picked up by 12:30 p.m., or they will be resold with no refunds.

**Noon to 1:55 p.m. — Senior Issues Seminar - Older Adults, Taking Care of Ourselves: Staying Out of Probate, All About Wills, Medical Directives, and More!**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

Learn how to grow your independence and manage your vision loss as an older adult. Learn about how to make decisions related to estate planning and medical directives geared toward ensuring you remain independent and the decision-maker. Please join us for an informative, thought provoking, and inspiring seminar. For seniors and others facing vision loss.

Marguerite Woods, president, Maryland Senior Issues Division; Board Member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**Noon to 1:55 p.m. — Sports and Recreation Seminar: Sound Bath and Acupuncture**

*Warfield Ballroom*

Come to participate in a sound bath, which is a full body listening experience that intentionally uses sound to provide gentle and restorative therapeutic processes to nurture mind and body. Acupuncture is also available for those interested. Bring your own yoga mat or towel.

Donations of $20 - $40 are encouraged but not required.

Daniel Kemp, Harmony Works; Baltimore, Maryland

**1 to 4 p.m. — NFB of Maryland Career Fair**

*Lindsay Ballroom B and C*

Are you looking for a job? Are you hoping to move up in your field? Are you seeking a different opportunity? Or, are you looking to hire new talent? Prospective employers are eager to meet prospective employees and vice versa. Attend the 2024 NFB of Maryland Career Fair. Employers should sign up in advance by visiting **NFBMD.org/2024JobFair**. Job seekers are encouraged to sign up in advance by visiting **NFBMD.org/2024JobFair**, but walk-ins are permitted. Job seekers must bring resumes to share.

Pam Goodman, co-chairperson, NFBMD Employment Committee; Linthicum, Maryland; Janice Forbes, co-chairperson, NFBMD Employment Committee; Laurel, Maryland

**1 to 6 p.m. — Convention Registration and Packet Pickup**

*Fitzgerald North foyer*

**2 to 3:55 p.m. — NFB of Maryland Philosophy Seminar**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

What is the NFB philosophy? Why does it matter? How do we apply it to our individual lives? Come to this seminar to engage in thought provoking discussions on NFB philosophy and its practicable applications.

Qualik Ford, President, Maryland Association of Blind Students; Halethorpe, Maryland; Juhi Narula, Immediate Past Vice President, Maryland Association of Blind Students; Baltimore, Maryland

**2 to 3:55 p.m. — First Aid Seminar**

*Burke Room*

Do you know how to use a fire extinguisher; how to assist a person who is choking; what to do about a severe cut or burn? What about how to detect shock, hypothermia or hyperthermia? Come to the NFBMD First Aid Seminar to learn about these topics and much more. Space is limited, and advanced registration is required. Participants will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Visit **forms.gle/3yqN8AxQ4Hh6vp7r8** to sign up.

Christine Grassman and Braden Flax, certified CPR/First Aid/AED instructors; Falls Church, Virginia

**2 to 3:55 p.m. — Advocacy Seminar: — Overcoming Technophobia**

*Warfield Ballroom*

Want to conquer your technophobia? Come to this seminar to learn how to use your phone more effectively. Learn about gestures and ways to maximize your smart phone. Learn how to more easily use Zoom. Learn about mobile applications that are both simple and useful. Explore a variety of accessibility problems and possible solutions for them.

Sharon Maneki, Chairperson, Advocacy Committee, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Columbia, Maryland

**4 to 5:55 p.m. — Maryland Association of Blind Students Seminar**

*Grason Room*

Come learn about matters of interest to students including how to self-advocate in school, with potential employers, and in the world. Learn what resources are available for students. *Registration from 3:45 to 4 p.m.*

Qualik Ford, president, Maryland Association of Blind Students; Halethorpe, Maryland

**4 to 4:55 p.m.—NFBMD BELL ACADEMY REUNION**

*Burke Room*

Reunite with the NFB BELL Academy students from the 2023 session and prepare for the General Session NFB BELL presentation. Kids are asked to attend, and their families are welcome.

Brittany Bomboy, 2023 NFBMD BELL Coordinator; Baltimore, Maryland

**4:30 to 6:30 p.m. — Bingo**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

Come play everyone’s favorite game - Bingo and win prizes.

Sponsored by Blind Industries and Services of Maryland, Title Sponsor

**5 p.m. — NFBMD Cane Walk**

*Lindsay Foyer*

The Maryland Parents of Blind Children will host a cane walk for children and adults.

Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division; Baltimore, Maryland

**5 to 6:55 p.m. — Sports and Recreation Seminar: Free Swim**

*Sheraton Pool*

The Sports and Recreation Committee invites those interested to come to the pool for an open swim. A life guard will be on hand, and participants may entertain themselves by frolicking in the pool, swimming laps, or having fun with friends. *This activity is unstructured.*

**6 to 6:55 p.m. — Narrowing the Gap Reunion**

*Burke Room*

NFB Narrowing the Gap Teachers will get together for in-person networking and fun.

Casey Robertson, Professor, Louisiana Tech University; Ruston, Louisiana; Karen Anderson, Coordinator of Educational Programs, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland

**6:30 to 8:30 p.m. — Maryland Association of Blind Merchants Annual Meeting and Networking Reception**

*Warfield Ballroom*

Come learn about matters of interest to blind merchants and those in the Business Enterprise Program.

Melba Taylor, president, Maryland Association of Blind Merchants; Bowie, Maryland

**7 to 8:30 p.m.** — **Annual Networking Social for Families of Blind Children**

*Lindsay B and C*

Participants of the Parents and Educators Seminar are invited to come meet and network and enjoy light snacks.

Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division; Baltimore, Maryland

**7 to 8:55 p.m. — Dinner and a Play**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

The Braille is Beautiful Players will entertain and delight.

Debbie Brown, play director; first vice president, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Rockville, Maryland

**9 to 11:30 p.m. — Crab Idol**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom B and C*

This American Idol-style evening promises to be fun for all ages. Those wishing to perform songs can do so for $5 per person per performance. Chapters and Divisions will battle it out to determine which has the most talent. Enjoy snacks and fellowship thanks to the Maryland Association of Blind Students and Maryland Parents of Blind Children. Proceeds support NFBMD, MDABS, and MDPBC.

To sign up to perform, contact Qualik Ford or Garret Mooney.

### Saturday, February 17

**7 to 8:15 a.m. — At-Large Chapter Meeting**

*Burke Room*

The At-Large Chapter will meet face-to-face. Continental breakfast will be available.

Marguerite Woods, president; Baltimore, Maryland

**7 to 8:15 a.m. — Western Maryland Chapter Meeting**

*Cole Room*

The Western Maryland Chapter will meet in person. Continental breakfast will be available.

Wendy Ruth, president; Hagerstown, Maryland

**8 to 8:25 a.m. — Convention Registration and Packet Pickup**

*Fitzgerald North foyer*

**8:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. — Fun with Friends Childcare**

*Duncan Room*

Brittany Bomboy, coordinator; Baltimore, Maryland

### 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. — Saturday Morning General Session

### *Fitzgerald Ballroom*

**8:30 a.m. — Call to Order and Opening Ceremonies**

**8:45 a.m. — Reimagining Our Internal Programs**

**Get on the Pac Plan**

John Pare, Maryland PAC Plan co-chairperson; Baltimore, Maryland; Ann-Marie Laney, Maryland PAC Plan co-chairperson; Randallstown, Maryland

**Gold Cup Crab Race**

Juhi Narula, ticket agent; Baltimore, Maryland

**9 a.m. — Welcoming Remarks**

Mark Riccobono, President, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland

Ronza Othman, President, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**9:20 a.m. — Expect Much in Training, Work, and Beyond: A Report from Blind Industries and Services of Maryland**

Michael Gosse, president, Blind Industries and Services of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**9:30 a.m. —From Idea to Law: Guide Dog Protections in Housing**

Mary Lehman, Delegate, District 21, Maryland State House of Delegates; Laurel, Maryland

Sherry Shirek, Chairperson, NFBMD Guide Dog Committee; Baltimore, Maryland

**9:50 a.m. — Give and Get Much: A Report from Our National Office**

Kevan Worley, president, Colorado Center for the Blind Board of Directors and Principle, Worley Enterprises; Aurora, Colorado

**10:20 a.m. — Expect Much: A Report from the National Association of Blind Students**

Hunter Kuester, Treasurer, National Association of Blind Students; Menomoni, Wisconsin

**10:30 a.m. — Rehabilitation Services for the Future**

Toni March, director, Office of Blindness and Vision Services, Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS); Baltimore, Maryland

**10:40 a.m. — First Aid: Opportunities for Training for the Blind**

Christine Grassman and Braden Flax, certified CPR/First Aid/AED instructors; Falls Church, Virginia

**10:50 a.m. — Reports and Resolutions**

**11 a.m. — Adjourn**

**11 a.m. to 12 p.m. — Breakout: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Town Hall**

*Fitzgerald A*

Join us for a town hall on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Share ideas and priorities for incorporating DEI into NFB of Maryland programs and activities.

Qualik Ford, DEI Committee Co-Chairperson; Halethorpe, Maryland

**11 a.m. to 12 p.m. — Breakout: Membership Recruitment, Development, and Retention**

*McIntosh Room*

Those interested in exploring strategies for recruiting, developing, and retaining members are encouraged to attend this workshop. Each chapter should designate at least one representative.

Danielle McCann, Membership Coordinator, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland; Dezman Jackson, Membership Chairperson, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**11 a.m. to 12 p.m. — Breakout: Blind Parents Meeting**

*Lindsay A*

Share tips and tricks on how to parent using non-visual techniques. Network with other blind parents and caregivers.

Melissa Riccobono, co-chairperson; Baltimore, Maryland

**11 a.m. to 12 p.m. — Breakout: Blind Young People’s Group Organizing Meeting**

*Burke Room*

Are you a recent graduate or approaching graduation? Are you finished with your schooling and wondering what to do next? Are you new to your profession and feeling disconnected from people who’ve been in the workforce for a long time? Are you having trouble adulting? Then this meeting is for you. Come join others experiencing this same transition to explore organizing a Young Person’s Group within the NFB of Maryland.

Jeff Baer, Group Co-organizer; Potomac, Maryland; Juhi Narula, Group Co-organizer; Baltimore, Maryland

**12 to 12:15 p.m. — Convention Registration and Packet Pick-Up**

*Fitzgerald North Foyer*

**12:15 to 1:45 p.m. — Luncheon: The Education of Blind and Low-Vision Students**

*Lindsay B and C*

For parents, teachers of the blind, and those interested in matters concerning blind students.

Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children’s Division, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**12:15 to 1:45 p.m. — Luncheon: Reclaiming Independence After Vision Loss**

*Warfield Ballroom*

For seniors and others facing vision loss**.**

Marguerite Woods, president, Maryland Senior Issues Division; Board Member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**12:15 to 1:45 p.m. — Maryland Association of Blind Students Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon**

*Grason Room*

The Maryland Association of Blind Students will hold its annual business meeting, including planning future workshops and events and holding elections.

Qualik Ford, president; Halethorpe, Maryland

**1:20 to 2 p.m. — Banquet Ticket Exchange**

*Fitzgerald North Foyer*

### 2 to 5 p.m. — Saturday Afternoon General Session

### *Fitzgerald Ballroom*

**2 p.m. — Call to Order**

**2:05 p.m. — Expect Much, Give Much, Get Much**

Ronza Othman, president, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**2:45 p.m. — From Idea to Law: Guide Dog Protections in Housing**

Mary Dulany James, Senator, District 34, Maryland State Senate; Havre De Grace, Maryland

**2:55 p.m. — Expect Much in Education: Maryland Leads the Way for Blind Students and Teachers of Blind Students**

* W. Robert Hair, superintendent, Maryland School for the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland
* Conchita Hernandez, Statewide Low Incidence Specialist, Maryland School for the Blind; Washington, DC
* Casey West Robertson, Professor, Louisiana Tech University; Ruston, Louisiana
* Karen Anderson, education programs coordinator, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland

**3:25 p.m. — Expect Much in Employment**

* Sai Techawongtham Peterson, Mental Health Therapist; Baltimore, Maryland
* Nikki Jackson, Coordinator of Employment Programs, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland
* Ben Danforth, Economist, Social Security Administration; Rockville, Maryland

Panel Moderators: Pam Goodman, co-chairperson, NFBMD Employment Committee; Linthicum, Maryland; Janice Forbes, co-chairperson, NFBMD Employment Committee; Laurel, Maryland

**3:55 p.m. — Give Much in Retirement**

Virginia Bender, Treasurer, Eastern Shore Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Executive Board Member, Maryland Federation of the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees; Salisbury, Maryland

**4:05 p.m. — Emergency Mental Health Resources: 988 System**

**Samirah Abdul-Fattah, Community Engagement Coordinator, Behavioral Health System Baltimore; Baltimore, Maryland**

**4:15 p.m. — Expect Much Across the State: Maryland Department of Disabilities Programs**

Carol Beatty, secretary, Maryland Department of Disability; Baltimore, Maryland

Chelsea Hayman, director, Housing Policy and Programs; Baltimore, Maryland

**4:35 p.m. — Give Much, Get Much in Annapolis: Legislative Partnership Leads to Real Change**

Michele Guyton, Delegate, District 42, Maryland State House of Delegates; Baltimore County, Maryland

**4:45 p.m. — Reports and Resolutions**

**5 p.m. — Adjourn**

**6 p.m. — Reception and Cash Bar**

*Fitzgerald West Foyer*

**6:30 to 10 p.m. — Fun with Friends Childcare**

*Duncan Room*

Brittany Bomboy, coordinator

\*Childcare ends at 10 p.m., **or** 15 minutes after the banquet ends, whichever is earlier

### 7 p.m. — 58th Annual Convention Banquet

*Fitzgerald Ballroom*

Master of Ceremonies: Mark Riccobono, President, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland

Performance: Sligo Creek Players

Graduation Ceremony: Narrowing the Gap Teachers of Blind Students Program

Keynote Banquet Address: Kevan Worley, president, Colorado Center for the Blind Board of Directors; Principle, Worley Enterprises; Aurora, Colorado

Scholarships and Awards

**Immediately after the Banquet — Maryland Gold Cup Crab Race**

Race Callers: Ronza Othman and Juhi Narula

### Sunday, February 18

**7:30 to 9 a.m. — Luggage Collection**

*Warfield Ballroom*

For anyone needing to store luggage due to 11 a.m. hotel check-out time, including bus passengers

**7:30 to 8:45 a.m. — Training Center Information and Graduate Networking Breakfast**

*Lindsay B and C*

Those interested in learning about adjustment to blindness training can talk with training center ambassadors and graduates. Alumni from the Louisiana Center for the Blind, Colorado Center for the Blind, BLIND, Inc., and Blind Industries and Services of Maryland can reconnect. Breakfast will be available for $12 per person payable at the door.

Coordinators: Chris Danielsen (LCB), president, Greater Baltimore Chapter; Garret Mooney (CCB), president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children; and Matt Yannuzzi (BISM), president, Central Maryland Chapter

**8 to 8:30 a.m. — Nonsectarian Devotions**

*Fitzgerald Ballroom*

Judy Rasmussen, secretary, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Kensington, Maryland

**8:30 to 8:50 a.m. — Convention Registration and Packet Pick-Up**

*Fitzgerald North Foyer*

**9 a.m. to 1 p.m. — Sunday Morning Session***Fitzgerald Ballroom*

**9 a.m. — Call to Order**

**9:05 a.m. — Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: Celebrating Our Presidents**

* Mark Riccobono, President, National Federation of the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland
* Marc Maurer, Immediate Past President, National Federation of the Blind; Past President 1984 – 1986, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Catonsville, Maryland
* Sharon Maneki, Past President 1986 – 2006 and 2014 – 2018, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Columbia, Maryland
* Michael Gosse, Past President 2006 – 2008, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland
* Melissa Riccobono, Past President 2008 – 2014, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**9:55 a.m. — Our Library: High Expectations, High Achievements**

John Owen, director, Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled; Baltimore, Maryland

**10:05 a.m. — Expect Much in Our Children’s Future: NFB BELL Academy and STEM2U**

* Brittany Bomboy, 2023 Maryland NFB BELL Academy coordinator; 2023 Maryland STEM2U Coordinator; Baltimore, Maryland
* Erin Zobell, 2024 Maryland STEM2U Coordinator and NFB BELL Academy Southern Maryland Lead Teacher; California, Maryland
* Maryland NFB BELL Academy Students
* Maryland NFB STEM2U Students

**10:35 a.m. — Talk, Text, and Train**

* Marguerite Woods, Board Member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore Maryland
* Jane Hager, MAT Specialist, Telecommunications Access of Maryland, Maryland Department of Disabilities; Baltimore, Maryland
* Diane Ducharme, Blindshell USA; Timonium, Maryland
* Joanne Berman, Low Vision Consultant, Attorney; Easton, Maryland
* Vishnu Demir, Digital Navigation Program, University of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**11:05 a.m. — Audit Committee Report**

Barry Hond; Audit Committee Co-Chairperson; Baltimore, Maryland

**11:10 a.m. — Financial Report**

Jenivieve White, treasurer, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Owings Mills, Maryland

**11:30 a.m. — 2023 Business Meeting Minutes**

Judy Rasmussen, Secretary, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Kensington, Maryland

**11:45 a.m. — Resolutions Committee Report**

Chris Danielsen, NFBMD Resolutions Committee Chairperson; Baltimore, Maryland

**12:15 p.m. — Affiliate Elections**

**12:45 p.m. — Other Business**

**1 p.m. — Adjourn**

## A Closing Message

*On behalf of the officers and Board of Directors, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all Federationists and friends for your generous monetary donations and gifts of goods and services. We had a very successful year and an outstanding convention because of your help!*

Ronza Othman, President

**A quarter page ad for AdNet: Advocates for Workplace Excellence & Equality. On the right side is an emblem with the AdNet slogan and "31 years Anniversary". The main body of the ad reads "Leader in providing professionals with Accounting/Finance, Human Resources and Legal expertise. Serving the blind, deaf and mobility impaired community in the workplace by providing Reasonable Accommodations Support Services to government and corporate entities. Contact Betsy Cerulo, CEO bcerulo@adnetp3.com 410-715-4035"
The bottom left has a diverse group of professionals looking excited. The bottom right has three logos: nglcc: National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, Certified WBENC: Women's Business Enterprise, and SBA 8(a) Certified.**

Image Description: A quarter page ad for AdNet: Advocates for Workplace Excellence & Equality. On the right side is an emblem with the AdNet slogan and "31 years Anniversary". The main body of the ad reads "Leader in providing professionals with Accounting/Finance, Human Resources and Legal expertise. Serving the blind, deaf and mobility impaired community in the workplace by providing Reasonable Accommodations Support Services to government and corporate entities. Contact Betsy Cerulo, CEO bcerulo@adnetp3.com 410-715-4035". The bottom left has a diverse group of professionals looking excited. The bottom right has three logos: nglcc: National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, Certified WBENC: Women's Business Enterprise, and SBA 8(a) Certified.

## BRAILLE IS BEAUTIFUL

Na na na-na na na, na na na-na nah.

Na na na na nah, na na na-na nah.

**Chorus:**

Go on and live your life,

Don't need a bit of sight.

In the end you'll find

Braille is beautiful.

Put your fingers on the page.

Tell your friends it's all the rage.

It's all gonna be OK, yeah

Braille is beautiful!

Na na na na na na, Na na na-na nah Braille is beautiful!

Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.

**Verse**

Louis Braille was his name. Slate 'n' stylus was his game.

They tried to stop him, but we adopted the code that paved the way.

**Chorus**

Na na na na na na, Na na na-na nah Braille is beautiful!

Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.

Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.

BRAILLE IS BEAUTIFUL!

**ODE TO THE CODE**

*Sligo Creek, Digital Communications Consortium*

Going to the school to write an IEP,

The teacher says use print, because your child can see.

The equipment is too big, and large print is too rare,

And fifteen words a minute will not get you anywhere!

**Chorus:**

Braille is here, Braille is here, Braile is here to stay!

We will keep on using it, we don't care what you say!

Braille is here, Braille is here, we will sing its praise.

It's the system for the blind to get a job that pays.

They say that Braille's too tough to teach the newly blind.

Its codes and its contractions discombobulate the mind.

Contractions we've learned all, and codes we've mastered, too,

For blindness has no negative effect on our IQ!

**Chorus**

They say that Braille’s complex. They say that it’s too slow.

They say that new technology’s the only way to go.

But we’ll keep using Braille, because it is the key

To making sure that blind folks will be literate and free.

**Chorus** A quarter page ad for Maryland Relay. On the top right corner are two insignias: "Maryland Relay Dial 7-1-1" and "Maryland Department of Disabilities". The main text of the ad has large text that reads "Have confidence in every conversation" and small text that reads "Do you find it difficult to use a standard phone? Do people ask you to repeat yourself during telephone conversations? Do you miss important calls because you can't hear the phone ring? The [bold]Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT)[end bold] program is here to help by giving Maryland residents the opportunity to apply for State-provided telecommunications equipment to independently make and receive calls. Once you qualify, a skilled evaluator meets with you to determine the best device to support your day-to-day communications. The MAT program has a variety of equipment solutions to support clearer communication, including: -amplified phones -tablets -Ring signalers -Phone with large and/or high contrast  buttons -Caption telephones -And more. For more information: 800-552-7724
410-767-7253 (Voice/TTY)
410-801-9618 (Video Phone)
MDMAT.org" On the right side of the ad is a cartoon of an elderly woman holding a phone. At the bottom is the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications logo: Equipment Distribution Program

## Image Description: A quarter page ad for Maryland Relay. "Maryland Relay Dial 7-1-1, Maryland Department of Disabilities". The main headline says: "Have confidence in every conversation" and the main body reads "Do you find it difficult to use a standard phone? Do people ask you to repeat yourself during telephone conversations? Do you miss important calls because you can't hear the phone ring? The [Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT)] program is here to help by giving Maryland residents the opportunity to apply for State-provided telecommunications equipment to independently make and receive calls. Once you qualify, a skilled evaluator meets with you to determine the best device to support your day-to-day communications. The MAT program has a variety of equipment solutions to support clearer communication, including: amplified phones, tablets, Ring signalers, Phone with large and/or high contrast buttons, Caption telephones, and more. For more information: 800-552-7724, 410-767-7253 (Voice/TTY), 410-801-9618 (Video Phone), MDMAT.org" On the right side of the ad is a cartoon of an elderly woman holding a phone. At the bottom is the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications: Equipment Distribution Program logo.

### 2024 NFBMD Exhibitors

The following is a list of organizations that are participating in the 2023 - 2024 NFBMD Exhibit Hall. Check **NFBMD.org** for updates and additions to this list.

* National Federation of the Blind of Maryland
* Blind Industries and Services of Maryland
* Vanda Pharmaceuticals
* Maryland Technology Assistance Program
* Maryland Relay/Telecommunications Access of Maryland
* Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled
* Democracy Live
* Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
* Crafted Items by Terry Powers and Yasmin Reyazuddin
* En-vision America
* God Ain’t Done with Me Yet: Uniquely Blessed
* Integration Technologies Group
* JW.org
* Maryland Department of Disabilities
* Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
* National Aquarium
* NFB Newsline
* PS You Are Fabulous
* Soundpro
* The Image Center of Maryland
* The Wellness DJ, LLC
* Vispero

